

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of digital images including at least one image placeholder in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of images and said at least one image placeholder, wherein said plurality of images are not placed in said placeholder;

analyzing each of said different page layouts and spatially balancing said white space between said plurality of digital images and said at least one image placeholder in accordance with the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts ~~in accordance with a predetermined criteria~~; and

selecting the page layout based on the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images ~~said predetermined criteria~~.

2. Cancelled

3. Cancelled

4 (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1 wherein said analyzing said different page layouts comprises scoring each of said different page layouts.

5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of further scaling the plurality of digital images of said selected page layout by different amounts.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 3 wherein the amount of white space is minimized by using stochastic algorithms.

7. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 wherein said grouping of said plurality of digital images ~~predetermined criteria~~ includes placing said plurality of digital images in said different page layouts in a non-overlapping pattern.

8. Cancelled

9. (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 4 wherein said analyzing of said different page layouts comprises a iteration of comparing sequentially two different page layouts and selecting the best page layout until little or no further improvement in scoring is obtained.

10. (original) A method according to claim 9 further comprising the step of scaling individual images of the page layout obtained after said iteration.

11. (currently amended) A method according to claim 9 further comprising the step of rotating said plurality of digital images a predetermined amount.

12. Cancelled

13. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of positioning said plurality of digital images in said selected page layout so as to provide a desired border on said page.

14. (original) A method according to claim 12 wherein said white space is determined vertically between adjacent images in said page layouts.

15. (original) A method according to claim 12 wherein said white space is determined horizontally between adjacent images in said page layouts.

16. (currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of digital images in a predetermined page format including a background image utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

identifying an image to be used as a background image;

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts including said background image, each of said page layouts capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of digital images;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of said white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balancing said white space between said plurality of digital images ~~a predetermined criteria~~; and

selecting the page layout based on said amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images ~~predetermined criteria~~.

17. (original) A method according to Claim 16 wherein said background image is displayed with at least one reduced characteristic.

18. (original) A method according to Claim 17 wherein said at least one reduced characteristic is color saturation.

19. (original) A method according to Claim 17 further including the step of:

identifying at least one image to be placed at a predetermined image location.

20. (Cancelled

21. Cancelled

22. (currently amended) A method according to claim 16 further comprising placing said plurality of digital images in said selected page layout.

23. Cancelled

24. (original) A method according to claim 16 wherein said analyzing said different page layouts comprises scoring each of said different page layouts.

25. (original) A method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of further scaling the images of said selected page layout by different amounts.

26. (currently amended) A method according to claim 23 wherein the amount of said ~~white~~ space is minimized by using stochastic algorithms.

27. (currently amended) A method according to claim 16 wherein said grouping of said plurality of digital ~~predetermined criteria includes~~ placing images in said different page layouts is done in a non-overlapping pattern.

28. Cancelled

29. (original) A method according to claim 16 wherein said analyzing of said different page layouts comprises a iteration of comparing sequentially two different page layouts and selecting the best page layout until little or no further improvement in scoring is obtained.

30. (original) A method according to claim 29 further comprising the step of scaling individual images of the page layout obtained after said iteration.

31. (original) A method according to claim 29 further comprising the step of rotating said images a predetermined amount.

32. Cancelled

33. (original) A method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of positioning said images in said selected page layout so as to provide a desired border on said page.

34. (currently amended) A method according to claim ~~31~~23 wherein said white space is determined vertically between adjacent images in said page layouts.

35. (original) A method according to claim 23 wherein said white space is determined horizontally between adjacent images in said page layouts.

36. (currently amended) A computer software product for organizing a plurality of images in a predetermined format comprising a computer readable storage medium having a computer program which when loaded into a computer causes the computer to perform the following steps:

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts; wherein said plurality of images are not placed in a predefined area on said page each of said page layouts capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of said white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area~~a predetermined criteria~~; and

selecting the page layout based on said amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area~~predetermined criteria~~.

37. (currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of images in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

- providing a plurality of digital images;
- providing at least one image placeholder;
- selecting a number of said images and said at least one image placeholder for placement on said predetermined format;
- grouping said plurality of images and said image placeholder into a plurality of different page layouts each of said page layouts capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of digital images and said at least one image placeholder;
- analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts a predetermined criteria; and
- selecting the page layout based on the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of page layouts said predetermined criteria.

38. (currently amended) A method of organizing a first set of plurality of images and an image placeholder in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

- grouping said plurality of images and said image placeholder into a plurality of different page layouts, wherein said plurality of images are not placed in said placeholder, each of said page layouts capable of being printed;
- analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and image placeholder a predetermined criteria;
- selecting the page layout based on said the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images predetermined criteria; and
- storing said selected page layout for later use.

39. (original) A method according to claim 38 wherein said stored page layout is used with a second plurality set of images.